



AOT in Action

Welcome to AOT in Action, your weekly e-newsletter from the Arizona Office of Tourism (AOT).

A Message from Director Sherry Henry:

Good afternoon,

We are proud to announce that the Arizona Office of Tourism, in collaboration with the Arizona Council for Enhancing Recreation & Tourism (ACERT), is now offering the ACERT Map, a comprehensive recreational and historical site map guide.

This map is a valuable visitor tool and helps to promote the vibrant cultural diversity and outdoor attractions found throughout the Grand Canyon State. It goes beyond the standard map and highlights Arizona's recreational and natural attributes as well as the diverse historical and archeological sites found within the state.

Map locations highlighted include national parks and monuments, federal recreational areas, Bureau of Land Management (BLM) sites, state parks, Tribal Lands, and cultural and historical locations. Information found on the map indicates where to boat, fish, raft, canoe, swim, view mountain vistas or wildlife, find historical locations, ride equestrian trails, locate hiking or biking trails and campsites all through Arizona.

A printed version of the ACERT map is available for distribution at the 60 Local Visitor Information Centers, in addition to State Park, National Park, BLM, U.S. Forest and AZ Game and Fish sites located throughout the state. Maps are also available at AOT. An online preview of the map can be found at <http://arizonaguide.com/arizona-travel-info/arizona-maps>.

Also, thank you to all who participated in the Arizona Highways Travel Show this past weekend. It was great to see everyone out there promoting Arizona! And as a reminder, keep posting your summer deals on ValueAZ.com. We're gearing up to formally launch this campaign next week and we need your travel deals up on the site ready to go. For more information, please read the **AOT News** section below.

Have a great week!

AOT News

New Update to AOT's Research Web site!

The following items have been updated in the Research and Statistics section of AOT's business-to-business Web site www.azot.gov.

- [Airport Passenger Volume March 2010](#)
- [Airport Passenger Volume February 2010](#)
- [Airport Passenger Volume January 2010](#)
- [Lodging Performance 1st Quarter 2010](#)
- [Lodging Performance 1st Quarter 2010 \(By County\)](#)
- [State Park Visitation April 2010](#)

For additional information or questions, please contact Melissa Elkins, Research Manager, at 602-364-3716 or via e-mail at melkins@azot.gov.

Get your Summer Travel Deals on Value AZ.com!

Post your summer [travel deals](#) online because AOT is gearing up to re-launch its successful summer, in-state campaign, Value AZ! AOT, in partnership with the Arizona Hotel & Lodging Association and statewide industry partners, will be launching our summer campaign later this month. The campaign will showcase the amazing summer travel opportunities found throughout Arizona in addition to promoting the economic value of travel to the state. If you want your travel deal promoted, this is your chance! Upload your travel deals and packages to the [Travel Deals](#) section of www.azot.gov. There is no charge to list a package on the Travel Deals section. If you have questions or need additional assistance, contact Robin Jackalone at 602-364-3710 or via e-mail at rjackalone@azot.gov.

Calling all 2011 Annual Event Dates!

AOT is collecting all 2011 major annual event (fairs, festivals, art & crafts, rodeos, etc.) dates for the Arizona Calendar of Events. Please identify the exact dates of your events, details can be sent at a later date if not yet confirmed. Submit your items by **Tuesday, June 1**. For more information, contact Marjorie Magnusson at 602-364-3695 or via e-mail at mmagnusson@azot.gov.

Registration is Now Open for the 30th Annual Governor's Conference on Tourism

The Governor's Conference on Tourism is Arizona's only all-industry educational and networking conference for members of the hospitality, travel and tourism industry. Take home practical ideas from the industry's top experts, hear the latest in hospitality and tourism, network with more than 500 fellow professionals, and learn about products and services from exhibiting sponsors. Registration and conference details are available online now. Questions? Call 602.265.2252 or email info@aztourismconference.com.

AOT Activities

Arizona does International Pow Wow, Orlando Style

US Travel Association's International Pow Wow is the travel industry's premier international marketplace and is the largest generator of travel to the USA. In just three days of intensive pre-scheduled appointments, more than 1,000 U. S. travel organizations and approximately 1,500 International and Domestic Buyers from more than 70 countries conduct business negotiations that result in the generation of over \$3.5 billion in future USA travel. The event in Orlando marked the shows 42nd anniversary.

This year AOT's Director Trade & Media Relations, Mary Rittmann and Manager of Travel Industry Marketing, Jennifer Sutcliffe attended the event from May 15 – 19th in Orlando, Florida. The staff was joined by AOT's international representatives from Mexico, Germany and the United Kingdom for a week of meetings, appointments, and networking.

AOT had more than 120 prescheduled appointments with buyers from around the world who stopped by the Arizona booth to receive the latest product updates, discuss cooperative marketing opportunities and plan for the upcoming year. In addition, AOT participated in the Media Marketplace, where travel writers and journalists convened to receive the latest information on destinations around the U.S. Check back soon for a copy of the Pow Wow report. For more information contact Jennifer Sutcliffe at 602-364-3693 or jsutcliffe@azot.gov

Upcoming Events & Activities

Governor's Conference on Tourism

Date: July 12-14, 2010

Location: Tucson, AZ

Industry News

Study: Americans Planning to Travel and Spend More

After a few years of staying close to home, Americans are ready to start traveling again and will be spending more and staying away longer. But savvy, cost-conscious travelers will also be looking for value and are willing to haggle for the best deals, according to a survey released Friday.

"They are indicating that they will spend more but they are doing more and putting more effort to make sure they get the most for their money," said Beth Caulfield, the editor-in-chief of AOL Travel. "They are still very focused on value."

In a sign that the travel industry is starting to pick up, 67 percent of the 1,000 Americans questioned in the AOL online survey said they planned to spend more than \$1,000 on a holiday, five percent more than in 2009. Nearly 55 percent hope to take more than one vacation, an increase of four percent from a year ago. Fewer people are also planning shorter trips. But says MSNBC, almost half of American questioned in the poll said they plan to cash in their air miles this year, compared to 31 percent in 2009.

More people also suggested they would be flexible with their departure and return dates and more were willing to fly during non-peak times and to take connecting flights to save money. "I was surprised how far consumers are going to make sure they get the most value for their dollar," Caulfield said.

As more Americans get back on the road, rail and in the sky, they will also be asking for discounts and extras to clinch their travel plans. "They are making sure they are being proactive about asking," said Caulfield. "I think they are also looking for travel providers to really step up and add more value into their price."

Three-quarters admitted that a free breakfast could entice them to select one hotel over another and an equal number planned to ask their travel agent about discounts. (*Marketing & Tourism Trends, May 16*)

New York, Florida, California Top States for Overseas Travel

The Commerce Department says more overseas travelers visited New York in 2009 than any other state for the seventh year in a row. Visitation to New York fell 5%, slightly less than the national average. Florida moved to second place for the first time since 2004 with a 1% increase in visitors. California dropped to third place after experiencing a 13% drop in visitation. Nevada, Hawaii, Massachusetts and Illinois were next in visitation estimates. Of the 20 states or territories for which estimates were available, double-digit declines were reported by 10 states. Virginia visitation increased by 16%, leading the growth among six states posting growth in 2009. Cities most visited by overseas travelers were, in order, New York, Miami, Los Angeles, Orlando, San Francisco, Las Vegas, Washington, D.C., Honolulu, Boston and Chicago. Los Angeles, the second-most visited city for a decade, fell below Miami in 2009. (*Special to TA; Travel Advance, May 18*)

AMEX Survey Shows Uptick in Summer Travel Plans

Summer travel remains a priority for most Americans despite the economic downturn, according to the latest American Express Spending & Saving Tracker. The survey found that more than half (51%) are planning a vacation this summer. That figure was even higher among affluent Americans (73%) and young professionals (83%). On the other hand, nearly nine in 10 say they will stick to domestic destinations for their summer travel. Popular domestic destinations for summer travel are Las Vegas, Orlando, San Francisco and Los Angeles. Those who are planning to travel to Europe are focused on London, Rome, Paris and Athens. (*www.TravelPulse.com, 5/18; Travel Advance, May 19*)

Marriott Finds Growing Strength in Biz Travel

A first-of-its-kind poll of business travelers from four major economies commissioned by Marriott Hotels & Resorts indicates that 2010 may be shaping up as a year of transition from economic pessimism to greater confidence. But the survey also found that Chinese business people are more than twice as optimistic about their national economy and their jobs as Americans and Europeans, according to the Marist Institute for Public Opinion. Most responders in the four countries surveyed-the U.S., U.K., Germany and China-say business travel gives their companies and their careers a competitive edge. (*www.TravelPulse.com, 5/18; Travel Advance, May 19*)

International Visits up 22% in February

The Department of Commerce says 3.5 million international visitors traveled to the U.S. in February, an increase of 22% over February 2009. February was the fifth straight month of increases in U.S. arrivals. For the first two months of 2010, visitation was up 15% compared to the same period in 2009. International visitors spent \$10.5 billion in February, 3% more than in February 2009. February marks the first increase in monthly U.S. travel and tourism-related exports since 2008. *(Special to TA; Travel Advance, May 21)*

DHS Eliminates Paper Form for Visa Waiver Countries

The Department of Homeland Security on Thursday announced the elimination of the paper arrival/departure form (I-94W) for authorized travelers from nations participating in the Visa Waiver Program, a move DHS says will streamline secure travel for millions of visitors to the U.S. every year by consolidating the collection of traveler information and enhancing security by automatically providing DHS with important passenger information prior to departure. The move follows a successful seven-month pilot program conducted with the support of the Government of New Zealand on Air New Zealand flights from Auckland to Los Angeles International Airport

The elimination of the paper I-94W form enables travelers to provide basic biographical, travel and eligibility information automatically through the Electronic System for Travel Authorization prior to departure for the U.S. The U.S. Travel Association hailed the announcement, saying the move will help reduce confusion and increase the speed of processing for millions of visitors to the U.S. *(Special to TA; Travel Advance, May 21)*

TripAdvisor Announces World's Best Travel Spots with 2010 Travelers' Choice Destinations Awards

TripAdvisor®, the world's most popular and largest travel community, today announced the winners of its 2010 Travelers' Choice® Destinations Awards. The second year of the awards honors 576 of the best travel spots worldwide.

TripAdvisor Travelers' Choice Awards are based on the millions of real and unbiased reviews and opinions from travelers on TripAdvisor.com®. The winners were determined by a combination of travelers' destination comments, favorite places, and overall destination popularity on TripAdvisor.

Destinations were awarded in the following categories: Top Destinations in the U.S. and World, Best for Families, Romance, Beach & Sun, Culture & Sightseeing, Food & Wine, Nightlife, Outdoor & Adventure, Relaxation & Spa, and Top Emerging Destinations.

"Millions of travelers rely on TripAdvisor for travel inspiration and have helped identify the world's most outstanding destinations," said Christine Petersen, chief marketing officer for TripAdvisor. "From stunningly beautiful locales to hot spots with amazing attractions, the 2010 Travelers' Choice Destinations Award winners are truly incredible places that travelers love." For a complete list of winners, visit www.tripadvisor.com/TCDestinations.

Below are the rankings for Arizona destinations.

Grand Canyon, AZ was ranked
#5 for Outdoor & Adventure in the United States

Scottsdale, AZ was ranked
#5 for Relaxation & Spa in the United States

Sedona, AZ was ranked
#10 for Top 25 Destinations in the United States
#2 for Romance
#1 for Relaxation & Spa

Calendar of Events

Visit www.ArizonaGuide.com to find information on all the exciting [events, festivals and activities](#) held throughout the Grand Canyon State!

Connect with the Arizona Office of Tourism!

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Follow us on Twitter! <http://twitter.com/ArizonaTourism>